Delay in Exploration of Oil in Rajasthan

127. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been inivited to news-item titled "Pakistan exploiting India's oil reserves" which appeared in Times of India, New Delhi, dated January 31, 2002;

(b) whether it is a fact that Pakistan is pumping out oil and gas from Indian side by using modern technology;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there has been inordinate delay in exploration of oil bases of Rajasthan causing huge loss to the country; and

(d) what is the impact of development of sites of Petroleum and Gas in Sindh Province of Pakistan on Indian oil reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Both the two National Oil Companies, *viz.* Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd, (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd, (OIL), are actively engaged in their respective areas of operations in the State of Rajasthan. Emploration by Private/Joint venture consortiums has also been undertaken in the concerned blocks in the State in terms of the provisions of Production Sharing Contracts.

(d) Significant reserves of gas were discovered in Sind province of Pakistan in the early fifties which accelerated the quest for discovering similar oil/gas fields in the adjoining Indian territory, including the State of Rajasthan. The continuing efforts have yielded success resulting in the discovery of a number of small oil and gas fields and also production of natural gas in the State of Rajasthan.